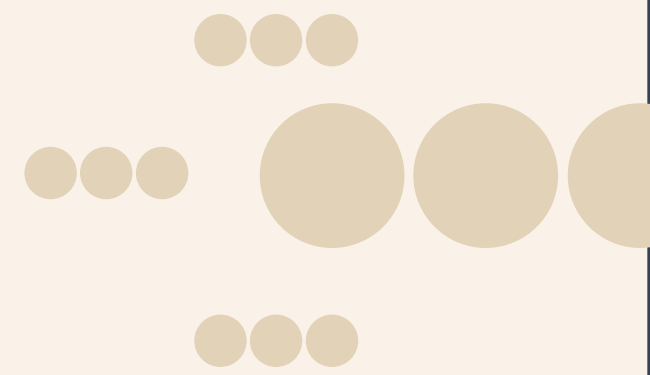




**The Cohn Institute for the History and
Philosophy of Science and Ideas**
The Lester and Sally Entin
Faculty of Humanities
Tel Aviv University



**Elkana
Forum**



Call for Proposals: Elkana Forum Workshops

A joint initiative of the Elkana Forum and the Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas at Tel Aviv University

Rethinking Scientific Problems Through Dialogue with Historical & Philosophical Perspectives

We invite proposals for small, focused workshops on significant scientific challenges as part of a new series titled Elkana Forum Workshops. These workshops aim to bring together scientists and scholars in history and philosophy of science (HPS) and other relevant disciplines from the humanities and social sciences to collaboratively engage with foundational, conceptual, or methodological questions arising in the sciences today.

Rather than treating historical and philosophical reflection as external critique, these workshops explore how such perspectives can clarify, complicate, or reframe live issues within scientific communities. The goal is to generate not only better answers, but also better questions.

Each retreat will center around a clearly articulated scientific or scholarly problem where broader perspectives might offer new angles of analysis, insight, or challenge. We aim to support 1–2 workshops per year, each organized around a specific theme or concern of current relevance.

What Broader Perspectives Can Offer

Scientific disciplines today face rapidly evolving questions under complex societal, technological, and epistemic conditions. Researchers often find themselves constrained by inherited assumptions, institutional logics, or disciplinary silos. The Elkana Forum Workshops offer a rare space to step back and ask:

- What is the problem we are trying to solve?
- How did we come to frame it this way?
- Could it be understood—or asked—differently?

We welcome initiatives where reflective perspectives—historical, philosophical, methodological, social—themselves become tools to advance scientific inquiry.

We are especially interested in proposals that clearly demonstrate how conceptual, historical, or philosophical perspectives matter now—in the context of scientific uncertainties, theoretical disputes, methodological tensions, or societal pressures. Examples might include (but are not limited to) conceptual tensions in biology (e.g. epigenetics) or redefinitions of biological or ecological systems, interpretive problems in physics, methodological and epistemological questions from the neurosciences, modeling assumptions in economics, or themes surrounding AI.

Workshop Format and Objectives

Each workshop should:

- Be small-scale (6–15 participants) and held in person over 1–2 days.
- Focus on a real-world scientific or scholarly issue, broadly defined.
- Be structured to foster intensive, critical, and imaginative dialogue rather than standard presentations.
- Include both practicing scientists and scholars from historical, philosophical, or related fields.
- Aim to generate new perspectives, clarify foundational assumptions, or open new directions for inquiry.

Workshops will be hosted by The Cohn Institute and Department of History and Philosophy of Science. Selected workshops will receive logistical and modest financial support, including help with organizing the event, locating suitable venues, and covering travel and accommodation costs.

The final program and participant list will be co-developed by the applicants and the Elkana Forum Workshops Committee, ensuring conceptual depth and coherence.

We encourage submissions from interdisciplinary teams or individuals, and welcome proposals at any career stage but particularly encourage proposals from early-career researchers.

Proposal Guidelines: A Call for Intellectual Boldness

We invite applicants to make a clear and compelling case for the scientific or intellectual problem at stake. Why is it urgent, unresolved, or conceptually unstable? Why is interdisciplinary reflection essential now?

Proposals should be no more than 3 pages and include the following:

- Title and Short Summary: A clear title and a 2–3 sentence overview of the retreat’s core concern.
- The Scientific or Scholarly Problem: What is the core challenge, and why is it urgent, unresolved, or conceptually unstable?
- Limits of Current Approaches: Where do existing methods or concepts fall short?
- Why This Retreat: How will the proposed format and perspectives shift the conversation?
- Workshop Design: Structure (e.g., dialogue, provocations, pre-circulated readings).
- Participants: Tentative list of 6–15 potential participants.
- Expected Outcomes: Conceptual frameworks, collaborations, or publications.
- Scientific Value: How the retreat will benefit participating scientists directly (e.g. new conceptual clarity, novel framing, alternative approaches).

Please also include a short cover letter and a CV (or link to relevant profile).

Submission & Contact

Send your proposals to cohn@tauex.tau.ac.il by Nov 1, 2025.

For questions or to discuss preliminary ideas, contact Ori Belkind or Ohad Parnes

About the Series

The Elkana Forum Workshops series is a collaborative initiative between the Elkana Forum and the Cohn Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas at Tel Aviv University. The series honors Yehuda Elkana, the visionary historian and philosopher of science who founded and led the Cohn Institute for many years.

